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Teachers' and Students' Perception of Students' Rating as a Tool for Evaluating Language Instruction in College of Education, Warri, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study was designed to investigate teachers' and students' perception of students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction in College of Education. It examined the percentage of teachers and students who perceived students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction; it also tested to ascertain the significant differences in the perception of students' rating as a tool for evaluating teachers' language instruction. The population of the study comprised all the fourteen (14) lecturers and all the two hundred and twenty one (221) Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) students of the English Department, College of Education, Warri in the 2015/2016 academic session. The manageable size of the population informed the researchers' choice of purposively using the entire population as the sample for the study. Two research questions were answered and three research hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Two instruments titled Teachers' Perception of Students' Rating (TPSR) with a reliability coefficient of 0.68 and Students' Perception of Students' Rating (SPSR) with a reliability coefficient of 0.87 were used to gather data for the study. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The result of the study showed that there is no significant difference in the perception of NCE students on students' rating as a tool for evaluating teachers' instruction but data analysis revealed a significant difference in the perception of NCE students of different academic levels on students' rating as a tool for evaluating teachers' instruction. Furthermore, there is no significant difference in the perception of teachers of different academic qualifications and years of teaching experience on students' rating as a tool for evaluating teachers' instruction. It was concluded that students' rating of teachers' instruction should be adopted for quality education and academic excellence instead of the use of publications, paper presentation at conferences and workshops attendance for annual performance evaluation for teachers in College Education, Warri and similar institutions.

Keywords: Teachers, Students, Perception, Rating Tool, Evaluation, Language Teaching

Introduction

Academic staff in tertiary institutions may have neglected the teaching aspect of their primary assignment due, in part, to the proverbial "publish or perish" syndrome. Consequently, pedagogical activities suffer and grades are awarded arbitrarily whether or not students are taught or guided to learn (Idaka, Joshua & Kritsonis, 2006). This

seeming lack of interest in what transpires in the classroom may be a serious factor in the quality of graduates produced. Monitoring and evaluation of their teachers, student classroom behaviour is therefore necessary if higher education is to achieve its objectives. Currently the institutions annual performance evaluation by heads of department and faculties are prevalent. Not much attention is paid to other forms of evaluation including student's evaluation of their teachers, yet student evaluation may be an important indicator of teaching effectiveness.

Evaluation is a key element in assessing the output of education programmes and consists of objective assessment of projects, programmes or policies at all of its stages, i.e. planning, implementation and measurement of outcomes. It should provide reliable and useful information allowing curriculum planners at all levels to apply the knowledge thus obtained in the decision making process (Beran & Rokosh, 2009; Griffin & Cook, 2009). Evaluation is normally divided into two broad categories formative and summative. Formative evaluation sometimes referred to as internal evaluation, is a method for judging the worth of a programme while its activities are in progress. This kind of evaluation focuses on the process, with main purpose to spot deficiencies so that the proper learning interventions that allow the learners to master the required skills and knowledge can take place (Joshua & Joshua, 2006; Napkodia, 2011). Evaluation is also useful in analyzing learning materials, student learning and achievements, and also teachers' effectiveness. On the other hand summative evaluation sometimes referred to as external evaluation is a method of judging the worth of a programme at the end of the programme activities. The focus is on the outcome which could be in students' performance and as judged by teachers' effectiveness.

Students' rating of teachers' instruction in tertiary institutions as an effective tool for teachers' evaluation has attracted papers from scholars within and outside Nigeria such as Hill, Lomas & MacGregor, (2003) and Nakpodia, (2011). These spectrums of study empirically highlight the validity and relevance of students' rating of teachers' instruction which has continued to be a controversial process of - evaluating teachers' effectiveness. These controversies need to be addressed to avoid committing errors in evaluating teachers' instruction in tertiary institutions like showing that a teacher has adequate teaching skills when he does not and, failure to observe the presence — of teaching skills in a teacher when the teacher actually possesses such skills.

The principal goal of education should be creation of men and women, who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done and the object of education is to teach us to love beauty (Plato, 380 B.C.E). It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it. Aristotle, (330 B.C.E). Education is freedom not just preparation for life, but life itself says Dewey(1938). Consequently, education is what survives when what was learnt has been forgotten. Education must therefore be directed towards self-reliance, change and innovation. The importance of sound education to the wellbeing of mankind cannot be over emphasized. Ajzen & Nja, (2011) posit that sound education involves effective teaching. This is an activity that promotes student learning, which includes instructors' behaviors that foster students' learning of the instructor's and/or of the institution's educational objectives These include curriculum development, teaching, advising, and supervision of students' research as well as classroom performance. How effectively are these being carried out? There are different ways of carrying out evaluation of teachers' effectiveness in the classroom. These include, students' rating, a situation where a group of students from a course are interviewed by other faculty members about their experiences in different courses. A structured format is followed and naturally, a consensus view of the nature of the course, its strengths, weaknesses, and problems emerged.

According to Hill et al (2003) and Beran, Violato, Kline & Frideres (2005), results of students' rating of their lecturers are a matter of perception. How do the students perceive their lecturers? How do they perceive the importance and utility value of their rating their lecturers? Also, how do the lecturers perceive students' rating of them as lecturers? Students' perception of classroom instruction is their sensory experience of the world of teaching and learning around them. Education is the bedrock of any developing society like Nigeria. An educational institution formal or informal represents agents of positive change. Change, according to different concepts has been constant and consistent over time. Nakpodia, (2011) and Idaka et al., (2006) reiterate that the one continuing purpose of education, since ancient times, has been to bring people to realize what it is to develop

the intellect, to serve social needs, to contribute to the economy of a country, to create an effective work force, to prepare students for jobs or careers and to promote social or political systems. However, the purpose of education has changed from that of producing a literate society to that of producing a learning society, to provide for the fullest possible development of each learner for living morally, creatively, and productively in a democratic society and to teach learners how to think intensively and critically. In its best practices education is targeted towards creating a relatively permanent change in an individual, the learner. The expected changes in the learner must be evaluated and determined by employing well defined and transparent methods (Joshua & Joshua, 2006).

In Nigeria today, serious concern has been expressed by parents, lecturers, employers of labour and the entire society about the quality of graduates from universities and other tertiary educational institutions. Several reasons have been suggested for the poor quality but no consensus has been reached as to the effect of classroom interaction on the quality of our graduates.

The Concept of Students' Rating

The work of Griffin and Cook (2009) reveals that the most celebrated and most regularly used method in developed and developing countries is the student rating of teachers' instruction. The studies of Beran & Rokosh (2009), Nesser and Fresko (2002) and Arthur (2009) have shown that strict student evaluation practices have been part of higher education in these countries for decades. From the above it is obvious that evaluation of instruction means that students as consumers of instruction are made to express their opinion and feeling concerning the effectiveness of the lecturer's instructional process and activities during the semester and the extent to which they benefited from that process. In addition quality assurance in teaching should be the main objective of universities and colleges and methods of evaluating teachers' classroom instruction should critically consider students' rating a valid and reliable method. According to Nakpodia (2011) and in agreement with Banda (2012), the evaluation of lecturers' instruction should include the evaluation of efficiency in the relevant subject matter, communication skills, commitment to facilitating students learning and the degree of concern for individual students. Therefore, the best approach to the evaluation of lecturers should be the students' rating system where the students would assess and determine the skills and effectiveness of their teachers among other methods. The rating of the lecturers by the students on variables that have to do with their professional qualifications and ethics will help to check such moral vices prevalent in our tertiary institutions as sexual harassment, and commercialization of scores and grades (Banda, 2012), concluded. Students are the consumers of teaching consequently, are in a better position to evaluate teaching effectiveness. Teaching effectiveness up till now (notably in Colleges of Education) is carried out by means of the Annual Performance Evaluation Report (APER) which is not an effective source of information about academic staff emotional stability and moral standing with students (Nakpodia 2011).

Usefulness of Students' Rating of Teachers

As at today the most important benefit of student evaluation is the feedback that it provides directly to instructors, to enable them refine their courses and teaching practices as to provide students with better learning experiences. Students' evaluation of instruction according to Banda (2012) can play a positive role in improving the climate of teaching and learning. Students' evaluation can also show instructors what they are doing right and what they are not doing right and suggest areas for improvement. With the increasing emphasis on students' rating of teachers' instruction, colleges and universities are currently putting on good teaching as a result of its use for designating, honoring and rewarding good teachers (Joshua & Joshua, 2006; Nakpodia, 2011). It is therefore hoped that the use of students' ratings will increase in other climes, Nigeria inclusive. For some members of the academic staff, students' evaluation of teachers classroom instruction whether sponsored by the university or college administration, faculty board or students' union government are not reliable, not valid, or useful, and may even be harmful. Arthur (2009) sums up his finding and observations on student's rating of teaching that Student's ratings of teachers' instruction is clearly multidimensional, quite reliable, reasonably valid, and relatively uncontaminated by many variables, often seen as sources of potential bias and are seen to be useful by students, faculty, and administrators.

Research Questions

To investigate teachers' and students' perception of students' rating as a tool for evaluating Language Instruction in the College of Education, the following questions were raised.

1. What percentage of teachers perceives students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction in College of Education, Warri?
2. What percentage of students perceives students' rating as a tool for evaluating language in College of Education, Warri?

Hypotheses

The research questions were hypothesized as follows.

- Ho₁** There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers of different academic qualification on students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction
- Ho₂** There is no significant difference in the perception of students of different levels on students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction.

Methodology

This research used the descriptive survey design. Subjects in the study comprised 221 NCE students and 14 teachers in the department of English in the College of Education, Warri. Two instruments made by the researchers were used to elicit information from the respondents. They were the 221 and 14 copies of questionnaires tagged Students' Perception of Students' Rating (SPSR) and Teachers' Perception of Students' Rating (TPSR) respectively. In order to validate the instruments and determine their suitability for this study, they were subjected to expert appraisal and criticism by a Language Education specialist and a specialist in Measurement and Evaluation to ascertain face and content validity. Reliability check of the instruments was done via a pilot study using 45 NCE students and 20 teachers from English department of the College of Education, Agbor, Delta State. Cronbach's Alpha reliability test was used in calculating the reliability coefficient of both SPSR and TPSR. Reliability coefficient of 0.87 and 0.68 respectively was obtained which showed that both instruments were reliable for use for the study.

Data Analysis

The Four-Point Likert Scale was used and the weightings were Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. Descriptive statistics, t- test statistics and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics were employed in the analysis of data collected.

Table 1: Number of NCE students in the different academic levels

Academic level	Number	Percentage
100	65	29.4
200	85	38.5
300	71	32.1
Total	221	100

Table 1 presents the academic levels of the NCE students. From the total sample of 221 students, 65 (29.4%) were in 100 level, 85 (38.5%) were in 200 level and 71 (32.1%) were in 300 level.

Table 2: Teachers by their academic qualifications

Academic qualification	Number	Percentage
Ph.D	2	14.3
M.Ed/M.A	12	85.7
B.Ed/B.A	-	-
Total	14	100

Table 2 above showed the different academic qualifications of the teachers who taught the NCE students. Two (2) which represented the 14.3% held Doctorate Degree while twelve (12) which represented 85.7% were Masters Degree holders.

Research Question 1: What percentage of teachers perceived students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction in College of Education Warri?

Table 3: Descriptive statistics showing the percentage of teachers who perceived student's rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction in College of education Warri

Response	Number	Percentage
Do not perceive students' Rating as a tool	5	35.7
Perceive students' Rating	9	64.3
Total	14	100

Table 3 above presented the percentages of teachers who perceived students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction. Five (5) teachers representing 35.7% of the population of the teachers showed lack of awareness of the rating tool, while nine (9) teachers representing 64.3% of the population of the teachers claimed to be reasonably aware of the rating tool.

Research Question 2: What percentage of students perceived students' rating as a tool for evaluating in College of Education Warri?

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics Showing the Percentage of Students who Perceived Students' Rating as a Tool for Evaluating Language Instruction in College of Education Warri

Response	Number of Students	Percentage of students
Do not perceive students' Rating as a tool	5	2.3
Perceive students' Rating	216	97.7
Total	221	100

Table 4 above presents the percentages of students who perceived Students' Rating tool for evaluating language instruction. Five (5) students representing 2.3% of the sample displayed little or no knowledge of the rating tool, while two hundred and sixteen (216) students representing 97.7% of the sample display having adequate knowledge of the rating tool.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers of different academic qualifications, on students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction.

Table 5: T-test for independent samples showing differences in the perception of teachers of different academic qualification on students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction

t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
.085	12	.934
N=14		

The table above reveals that the computed **t** value of .085, significant at .934 and it is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that "there is no significant difference in the perception of teachers of different academic qualifications, on students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction" is accepted

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the perception of students of different levels of study on Students' Rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction

Table 6: ANOVA Showing the Differences in the Perception of Students of Different levels of Study on Students' Rating as a Tool for Evaluating Language instruction

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	426.065	2	213.033	5.667	.004
Within Groups	8195.184	218	37.593		
Total	8621.249	220			

N= 221

The table above shows an F-value of 5.67 which is significant at 0.04. The probability value of .004 is lower than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that "there is no significant different in the perception of students of different levels of study on students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction' is rejected.

Table 7: Post Hoc Tests Showing Multiple Comparisons of Students' Different Level of Studies and their Perception of Students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction

(I) Level		Mean Difference (I-j)	Std. Error	Sig.
100 Level	200 Level	-.919	1.010	.661
	300 Level	-3.384*	1.053	.006
200 Level	100 Level	.919	1.010	.661
	300 Level	-2.464*	.986	.046
300 Level	100 Level	3.384*	1.053	.006
	200 Level	2.464*	.986	.046

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 7 presents Multiple Comparisons, in the column labeled Mean difference (I-J) the mean difference values accompanied by asterisks indicate that students' level of study differs significantly from each other at the 0.05 level of significance. The results indicate that the 300 level NCE student's perception on student's rating is significantly different from both 100 and 200 levels NCE students.

Discussion of Findings

This study which examined teachers' and students' perception of students rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction in College of Education Warri, revealed teachers' positive awareness of students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction as shown in research question one, table 3. A good number of lecturers in College of Education Warri, confirmed awareness of the rating tool. This corroborated the assertions of Idaka et al (2006) that Nigerian lecturers are not different from their counterparts in developed countries. However, those lecturers who displayed negative awareness of the rating tool may have done so deliberately for personal reasons as the rating tool to some lecturers is an aberration. Perhaps also it is as a result of the level of maturity of students vis-a-vis their teachers who may see the students as immature to the extent that they may not perceive teaching effectiveness accurately. This is also in agreement with the finding by Joshua and Joshua (2006) that some members of academic staff have negative attitude towards students' evaluation of language instruction. According to this group, it is an invasion of their academic freedom for anyone to interfere into how they are teaching their courses and what results their teaching is producing in the learners and whether there could be room for improvement.

The findings from research question 2 as presented in table 4 also reveal students' awareness of students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction. This may be as a result of peer discussion, interaction with the learning environment and self- development. This finding supports Hill et al. (2003) and Nakpodia (2011) that students in a number of disciplines perceive students' rating of teachers' instruction as quality education. They

also opine that students will humbly appreciate teachers who have a good grasp of their course content, well organized, and are interesting to talk to. They will also be grateful to teachers who give feedback to them during the session and in assignments and also will show respect to teachers who are easy to be with and help them to learn. However students who displayed negative awareness of students' rating as a tool for evaluation may have done so as a result indecision. The scenario at hand is a typical example of students' divergent perception on the subject-matter according to their levels of study but in total support of it. The higher the students' level of study, the more knowledge and support they displayed for students' rating as a tool for evaluating teachers' instruction (Beran & Rokosh, 2009; Griffin & Cook, 2009). The 300 level students displayed good awareness of students' rating as a tool for evaluating teachers' instruction, followed by 200 level students and 100 students respectively. The reason could be attributed to years of interaction with the school environment, the more interaction the students had with the environment' the deeper the students' knowledge on their rights and privileges. Nakpodia (2011) and in agreement with Banda (2012).

The t – test for independent samples showing differences in the perception of teachers by academic qualification on students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction, was run to determine if there is a significant difference. The analysis on table 5 shows that hypothesis one which states that "there is no significant difference in the perception of teachers of different academic qualifications on students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction" is accepted. This is based on the fact that the computed t value of .085, significant at .934 is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. This is in agreement with the studies of Nakpodia (2011) and Banda (2012) that many lecturers notwithstanding their academic qualification are disposed to students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction. This may be as a result of job satisfaction exposure the current and emergent issues in education and commitment to work.

Hypothesis two as table 6 shows is rejected. This is based on the fact that the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) shows an F-value of 5.67 which is significant at .004 lower than the alpha level of 0.05. It therefore concludes that there is a significant difference in the perception of students of different levels of study on students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction. This finding corroborates Arthur (2009) who sums up his finding and observations on student's rating of teaching that Student's ratings of teachers' instruction is clearly multidimensional, quite reliable, reasonably valid, and relatively uncontaminated by many variables, often seen as sources of potential bias and are seen to be useful by students, faculty, and administrators.

Summary

The study is primarily designed to find out the perception of teachers and students on students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction in collage of education Warri. To achieve the purpose of the study two(2) research questions were answered and two (2) hypotheses were tested.

The results of the study revealed that:

- Nine (9) teachers representing 64.3% showed positive awareness of students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction while five (5) representing 35.7% showed lack of awareness.
- Five (5) students representing 2.3% of the students displayed negative awareness of the rating tool while two hundred and sixteen (216) students representing 97.7% of the students display positive awareness of the rating tool.
- There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers of different academic qualifications, on students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction.
- There is a significant difference in the perception of students of different level of study on students' rating as a tool for evaluating language instruction.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions were drawn: that many teachers as well as students had knowledge of student's rating as an evaluation tool, although they had not experienced it. Academic qualification of teachers did not negate their perception of students' rating of their work. Student's different levels of study affected their perception of students' rating as a tool for effective evaluation.

Recommendations

There is need to institutionalize students' rating of classroom instruction in the school system. Students as consumers of classroom instruction should be given opportunities to express their opinions and feelings concerning the teaching effectiveness of their teachers. To foster academic excellence in classroom instruction in the college of education, students' rating of teachers' effectiveness should be introduced as one of the instruments for academic staff annual evaluation. The report of such rating should be made known to members of staff and students so as to encourage self-appraisals and improvement in teaching and learning. If students' rating of teachers' instruction is put in place in the colleges of education and similar institutions of learning the entire educational system will become a citadel and a place for academic excellence.

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